

**ABSTRACT**

In the context of electronic documents approval systems, an electronic document  
5 or a section thereof provided with a status identifier. The status identifier, in  
addition to standard "valid" and "invalid" approval states, has at least one of a  
"modified and approved" state, indicating that modifications have been made to  
the document as previously approved by a user but that someone has taken  
responsibility for these modifications, and an "unknown" state, indicating that it is  
10 unknown if the document has been modified since approval by a user.